

Message Text

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73

ACTION COA-02

INFO OCT-01 ARA-16 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15

USIA-15 CG-00 INT-08 RSR-01 /096 W

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R 272211Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4919

INFO AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAN JOSE 3033

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, NU, CS

SUBJECT: BOAT SEIZURE INCIDENTS WITH NICARAGUA

REF: MANAGUA 3504

1. NEWSPAPER ACCOUNTS OF REPORTED VIOLATIONS OF FISHING ZONES (REFTEL) HAVE APPEARED IN THE LOCAL PRESS BUT NOT WITH PARTICULAR PROMINENCE. THERE HAS BEEN VERY LITTLE EDITORIAL COMMENT AND IN BALANCE COSTA RICANS DO NOT APPEAR OVERLY EXERCISED. THE GOCR IS MAKING OBVIOUS EFFORTS TO PLAY DOWN THE PROBLEM.

2. LAST WEEK IN A CONVERSATION WITH THE AMBASSADOR, FOREIGN MINISTER FACIO REFERRED TO THE INCIDENTS AND STATED QUITE CLEARLY THAT THE GOCR WANTED VERY MUCH TO SMOOTH THINGS OVER AND RESOLVE THE MATTER. FACIO SAID THAT HE THOUGHT THE SEIZURE OF THE "MARY FRANCIS" MAY HAVE BEEN REPRISAL FOR THE INCIDENT DURING THE WEEK-END AUGUST 11-12 WHEN A COSTA RICAN PATROL BOAT FORCED GENERAL SOMOZA'S YACHT AND ACCOMPANYING VESSELS TO LEAVE COSTA RICAN WATERS OFF
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CAPE SANTA ELENA. FACIO BELIEVES THAT

GENERAL SOMOZA WAS ABOARD THE YACHT AT THE TIME. HE SAID HE THOUGHT THE COSTA RICAN PATROL BOAT'S ACTION WAS IMPOLITIC ENOUGH BUT THE MINISTRY OF PUBLIC SECURITY IMPRUDENTLY ANNOUNCED WHAT HAD HAPPENED PUBLICLY. FACIO SAID THAT PRESIDENT FIGUERES CALLED SOMOZA TO SMOOTH THINGS OVER AND WAS ASSURED THAT ALL HAD BEEN FORGOTTEN. HOWEVER, THE SEIZURE AUGUST 18 OF THE "MARY FRANCIS" RAISES THE POSSIBILITY OF REPRISAL. IN ANY CASE, FACIO SAID HE WANTED TO PLAY ALL OF THIS DOWN AND HAD APPROPRIATE AUTHORITIES WORKING WITH THE NICARAGUAN AUTHORITIES TO RESOLVE THE PROBLEM.

3. WHEN ASKED ABOUT THE INCIDENT IN HIS REGULAR WEEKLY PRESS CONFERENCE, FIGUERES RAISED THE SUGGESTION OF REPRISAL BUT IN ALL OF HIS OTHER COMMENTS WAS MODERATE AND CONCILIATORY. HE EVEN INDICATED THAT HE THOUGHT THE COSTA RICAN COURTS WERE BEING TOO SEVERE WITH THE CREWS OF TWO NICARAGUAN VESSELS ARRESTED ABOUT THREE WEEKS AGO. THEY SHOULD, HE SAID, HAVE BEEN MERELY FINED AND RELEASED.

4. OUR CLEAR IMPRESSION IS THAT THE GOCR WANTS VERY MUCH TO SMOOTH THINGS OVER, HOPES THE PRESS WILL DROP THE SUBJECT, AND WILL TRY TO WORK OUT THE CURRENT SEIZURE INCIDENTS.

VAKY

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: SHIP DETENTION, PRESS COMMENTS, REPRISALS, MARY FRANCIS (NAME OF VESSEL)
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 27 AUG 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973SANJO03033
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS VAKY
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: SAN JOSE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730813/aaaaajhk.tel
Line Count: 93
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION COA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: MANAGUA 3504
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23 JAN 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <23-Jan-2002 by thigpegh>; APPROVED <11 FEB 2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BOAT SEIZURE INCIDENTS WITH NICARAGUA
TAGS: PFOR, NU, CS
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005